



U. S. Department of Agriculture
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NEW MEXICO COMBATS PREDATORY ANIMALS AND INJURIOUS RODENTS.

Washington, D. C.

Prowling predatory animals are on the decrease in New Mexico due to the intensive campaign waged by State and Federal forces of the Biological Survey, United States Department of Agriculture. One thousand and fifty-nine coyotes, 201 bobcats, 55 wolves, 13 mountain lions, and 7 bears including 3 grizzlies, have been exterminated at a total cost of \$11.20 an animal, without deducting fur values. This is considered a very small outlay for protection in view of the fact that the average gray wolf kills \$1,000 worth of live stock a year, while a mountain lion destroys \$500 worth of stock and the bobcat and coyote \$50 worth each. On this basis the saving represented in this cooperative campaign is nearly nine times the amount of the gross expenditure.

Poisoning operations against predatory animals for the coming winter from December to March, 1919, are planned on a scale so extensive as to include the main winter ranges of the State. With more carefully systematized methods and a larger and more dependable personnel at the disposal of the United States Bureau of Biological Survey than has heretofore been available, quick and permanent relief from coyotes and bobcats is promised for New Mexico stockmen who are keenly interested in the project and are willing to cooperate in the work to the best of their ability.

(Editors:- The additional details below are for publications desiring more particulars.)

To Increase Trapping Force.

During the recent summer 12 hunters paid by the State and 15 in the employ of the Federal Government have conducted an intensive trapping campaign. This force will be increased to 40 during the fall and winter trapping season as at those seasons the animals are more easily captured, while the value of

their fur gives an income to the State which almost pays for the cost of killing

Illustrative of the great value of predatory animal control, during the three years of the Government's organization work in New Mexico, the gray wolf population has been reduced from 300 individuals to less than 40. The entire extermination of such prowlers will mean great reduction in the local losses of live stock. Bears also have been very destructive in the Pecos Mountain region. During the recent grazing season they killed approximately 125 head of valuable cattle. Similar damage in the Black Range and in the Mogollon Mountains makes it evident that a total of at least 250 head of cattle as well as a large number of sheep were killed by bears. These facts are worthy of consideration, the Federal specialists point out, in view of the general and concerted efforts now under way on the part of sportsmen to enact legislation that will prevent trapping of bears or hunting them with the aid of dogs.

Ninety Per Cent of Prairie Dogs Killed.

Between April and August cooperative work in exterminating prairie dogs was conducted over 652,000 acres of infested land; more than 60 tons of poisoned grain being used and 3,403 landowners assisting in the work. An average of over 90 per cent of the prairie dogs on the treated areas have been killed; in many places extermination has been complete. Practically all the crop areas subject to damage by prairie dogs have been treated, amounting to 400,000 acres. The value of this work is evidenced from the fact that on the untreated land the total loss of the crop, or at least a 50 per cent loss, often occurs as a result of prairie-dog infestation. It is estimated that the crop saving effected this year from prairie-dog control amounts to approximately \$500,000.

On the range lands of New Mexico 252,000 acres have been treated with poison, while the plans are complete to extend this control as rapidly as possible over 1,500,000 acres. As a rule, the average cost of initial treatment on range areas has been less than $3\frac{1}{2}$ cents an acre.

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